

**REMARKS BY
U.S. SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE DAN GLICKMAN
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[As prepared for delivery]

Good morning. First, I want to thank USDA Chief Economist Keith Collins and his team. Every year, they do an outstanding job of organizing this forum. And every day throughout the year, they provide invaluable counsel to me and invaluable service to the American people.

You know, at the risk of sounding like Rodney Dangerfield, USDA and agriculture in general have had a hard time getting respect lately. I don't know how many of you have heard of Craig Kilborn...he hosts the talk show that's on after David Letterman, which means his viewing audience consists mainly of insomniacs and college students. Well, right after the First Lady appeared on the Letterman show, this Craig Kilborn starts joking that he's going to one-up Letterman by getting *the Secretary of Agriculture* to come on his show. "*The Secretary of Agriculture*," he said, as if there couldn't possibly be anyone more obscure on the face of the earth. And he put my face up on the screen three or four nights in a row.

Well, we called his bluff, and I appeared on his show, and I held my own if I may say so myself. But the kicker is - and I'm not kidding here - that night, with me as a guest, Craig Kilborn tied his high-water mark in the ratings. You may say it's a coincidence...but I think not.

Nevertheless, the disrespect keeps coming. In *Sports Illustrated* a few weeks ago, one writer compared USDA to the listless feeling around the perennially mediocre Washington Wizards basketball team. The article called the Wizards "the sports equivalent of...the Department of Agriculture: Everyone knows it's located in the nation's capital but no one really cares."

My response is simply that the Washington Wizards have a record of something like 16-40, so perhaps it's not surprising that no one cares about them. But there are about 2 million farmers and hundreds of millions of consumers out there who care a great deal about the work of USDA and the state of American agriculture. And that's what I'm here to talk about today.

This is my fifth appearance before the Outlook Forum as Secretary of Agriculture. During these five years, to paraphrase Dickens, we have seen the best of times and the worst of times.

When President Clinton asked me to become Agriculture Secretary in December of 1994, how could I refuse? The farm economy was as bullish as ever. Prices were reaching record heights. Exports were strong. It would have been like turning down the chance to be CEO of Cisco Systems.

But I knew even then that fortunes could easily shift, and sure enough they did. For about three

years now, many American farmers and ranchers have been battered by rock-bottom prices, shrinking global demand and record worldwide production, not to mention a slew of natural disasters.

During the last two years, Congress and the Administration were compelled to act -- \$6 billion in emergency aid in 1998, followed by another \$9 billion last year. This certainly helped many farmers. Plenty of them would not have made it without that assistance. Nevertheless, I believe it was more of a quick fix than a real solution. We applied a very expensive tourniquet, when the situation actually called for a blood transfusion.

Scrambling at the last minute to throw together ad hoc assistance is not best way to help our farmers. Why can't we have all the assistance mechanisms *in place*, ready to kick in when the farm economy heads south? Why can't we fix the leaky roof *before* it starts raining?

I think we can, and that's why we've unveiled a new safety net proposal that offers a fairer, more efficient and more cost-effective way to protect farmers. At its heart is several billion dollars, over the next two crop years, in *countercyclical income assistance* -- payments go up when incomes go down, and vice versa. This assistance is also *targeted*. *Targeted* to smaller producers who generally have smaller incomes. *Targeted* to those farmers suffering the greatest hardship. And unlike the last two emergency bills, *targeted* to the farmers who have actually grown the crops.

That seems like a pretty common-sense notion -- that those who are struggling the most deserve the most help. But the AMTA formula that we've been living by for nearly four years, with its fixed payments, has no such logic. Thanks to AMTA, recent supplementary farm payments haven't been tied to need, to size or to current production.

Still, we're not looking to replace AMTA with our plan. Our proposal lays over the top of the 1996 Farm Bill. The new income assistance will come in addition to -- not instead of -- AMTA payments and other '96 Farm Bill payments. AMTA participants would continue to receive their full payments, and 98 percent of them would also be eligible for an additional check under our proposal.

There's more to our plan, of course, than income assistance. It includes new direct conservation payments -- *direct, not on a cost-share basis* -- that reward farmers for being good environmental stewards, and it enhances existing conservation efforts like the Conservation Reserve Program, the Wetlands Reserve Program and the Farmland Protection Program.

There are certain steps I can take administratively, without congressional approval. So I've decided to freeze loan rates for wheat, corn, soybeans, rice and cotton for this crop year. And we're also giving farmers more marketing flexibility by providing low-cost financing to build or upgrade on-farm storage facilities.

On the risk management front, we're looking to make crop insurance more affordable and more accessible, by extending the premium discount on buy-up coverage, offering multi-year coverage, making coverage available to more kinds of farmers and expanding our risk management education program. We also would like to see Congress pass wholesale crop insurance reform, consistent with the principles we announced last year.

We also want to create and expand market opportunities for farmers. On the domestic side, that means promoting the growth and development of farm cooperatives; exploring alternative uses of crops through a new bioenergy program; and funding for rural Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities. On the trade side, for the third year in a row, I am seeking the authority to redirect unused money from the Export Enhancement Program to more effective trade-supporting initiatives like international food aid.

And while we're talking about trade, I can't pass up this opportunity to talk about China. Approving permanent Normal Trade Relations -- and thus easing China's accession to the World Trade Organization -- is the most important trade issue facing the agriculture community this year.

We're talking about the world's largest country, home to one out of every five people on earth, with an economy growing at 7 percent a year. Yet last fiscal year, every man, woman and child in China consumed less than 1 dollar's worth of American agricultural goods. ***In one year...less than a dollar a person.*** The bilateral trade relationship is wildly out of balance, with the Chinese selling us five times more in total goods and services than we are selling them. We simply cannot afford such limited access to a market this large and this fertile.

In joining the WTO, China would agree to eliminate many non-tariff barriers and to cut tariffs dramatically. The tariff on frozen beef cuts, for example, would fall from 45 percent to 12 percent. Cheese tariffs would drop from 50 to 12 percent, and oranges from 40 to 12. When it's all said and done, based on conservative estimates, ***Chinese membership in the WTO will mean an additional \$2 billion a year in U.S. farm exports to China by 2005.*** A no vote on NTR is a vote to cede this lucrative market to the EU, Canada, Australia, Argentina and others. It would be a kind of unilateral economic disarmament.

This may be the biggest test yet of our nation's commitment to a global economy based on fair trade principles. We all know how vocal and intense the opposition can be on trade issues. We saw it in 1997 with fast track. We saw it just a few months ago in Seattle. The President will devote considerable time, energy and political capital to the NTR fight. And I hope the agriculture community will as well.

Whenever you come forward with something new and ambitious like our new safety net plan, you might as well be putting a bullseye on your back. And that's fine; people have a right to

critique any proposal. But I can't help but note the irony. Many of the people calling this proposal insufficient are the very same people who masterminded the 1996 Farm Bill, which cut holes in the safety net in the first place. Amazing how a farm crisis can turn everyone into a prairie populist.

To those who find fault with the Administration's plan, I say: come forward with your own ideas. I think it was Harry Truman who said that any jackass can kick down a barn door, but it takes a statesman to build the barn. Now, I'm not calling anybody a jackass. I'm just saying that it's a whole lot easier to make criticisms than to offer constructive solutions of your own - especially when you're free to pass off-the-books emergency bills and don't have to operate within the framework of a balanced budget. My message to Congress is: let's build the barn together. And let's not allow our farmers to become an election-year political football.

I am more than happy to be flexible and to work with Congress. Our proposal is meant to be the first word, not the last word, on these matters. It is not about rigid funding levels, but about a set of ideas, a new philosophical compass that can steer us toward a new farm bill in 2002.

I think it's time we broke out of some of the farm policy paradigms and assumptions that have hemmed in our thinking for several years. I've come up with 5 broad principles - many of them reflected in our safety net proposal - that I think should guide the next generation of farm policy.

The first is that *farm programs should support farmers, not commodities*. In other words, let's base our payments and government assistance on farm income rather than crop prices. After all, *it's income - not just price* - that allows farmers to pay the bills, upgrade their equipment and have a decent standard of living. The commodity-driven system we've had for decades helps some people, but it allows many others to slip through the cracks. It also seems to have encouraged the massive consolidation we've seen in agriculture. Because when farm support is issued on a crop-specific or per-bushel or per-pound basis, the larger you are the bigger your payment.

Second, we need *a farm policy that is more comprehensive and national in scope*. I've always thought it was curious that the '96 Farm Bill was supposed to encourage planting flexibility, and yet we continue to have a narrow, seven-crop, regional system that doesn't support or reward farmers for branching out into new and specialty crops.

It wasn't until last summer's drought, which was centered in the Northeast and mid-Atlantic regions, that certain people -- like the national media, for example -- began to realize that there are actually farmers in these parts of the country. In fact, from Maine to Virginia, there are 200,000 farmers. They too deserve support and protection, and our safety net begins to provide it.

So what tools do you use to direct more resources to less traditional growers? One way is to *shake up our risk management programs, to make them more inclusive*, which is my third.

principle. Under the federal crop insurance program, we still do not have the authority to provide affordable protection for livestock, even though ranchers account for about *half* of all agricultural sales and proceeds. So our safety net plan includes a pilot livestock insurance program, which I hope we can expand in the future. Another thing we want to do is lift the area-wide trigger on our Non-Insured Assistance Program, making it easier for farmers of uninsurable crops to receive assistance after a major loss.

Fourth, ***conservation – the preservation of our land and soil – must be a centerpiece of farm policy, not an afterthought.*** By creating incentives for all farmers to be environmentally responsible, we can increase farm income at the same time that we protect our natural resources. The land is not something that can be replaced like a piece of machinery. We need to respect it above and beyond its crop-producing capability; we must recognize it for what it is: our most valuable commodity of all. Long after this year's crop is grown, harvested and sold...and the next year's and the next year's...what still will remain is the land. We must hand it to the next generation in as good a shape as we found it. And we can do that while still having an agriculture sector that is productive and profitable.

My fifth principle involves ***integrating rural development into farm policy.*** In today's world, most people in rural America cannot make a decent living in production agriculture alone. I wish they could, but the fact is that many farmers need to supplement their income with off-farm opportunities; often that's the only way for them to stay on the land. So we need a diversified rural economy, one where entrepreneurship can flourish, one with sound physical and information infrastructure. Rural communities must also have the solid tax base, the clean streets, the safe neighborhoods, the good schools, the skilled labor pool – everything that would make someone want to bring their family or business to a community.

At USDA, we have programs that address these issues. We offer loans and grants for rural business, rural housing and rural utilities. We also have a Distance Learning and Telemedicine program that allows rural students, for example, to use information technology to connect long-distance with museums, libraries and other classrooms. The program also allows rural citizens to get proper medical care by consulting electronically with specialists thousands of miles away. We must make sure that small towns and rural areas have the modern information infrastructure that the cities and suburbs have. In today's world, you can start a business from anywhere and still be able to access and communicate with people around the globe...as long as you have the proper tools.

A new farm policy must go beyond just the wheat program, the rice program, the cotton program and so on to address the more fundamental question: how can we help preserve the nation's agrarian tradition by providing more rural economic opportunity, whether it's in farming, retail, tourism or Internet start-ups?

Over the last 60 years, agriculture has been dramatically transformed, and yet farm policy has remained relatively stagnant. People generally do not and cannot farm the way they did in the

1930s and 40s, so government's role in helping them has to change accordingly.

The days when most farmers could make ends meet by simply bringing bulk commodities to market are over. That's why a new farm policy must highlight new and different ways for farmers to make money and capture a greater share of the consumer dollar. That means promoting farm cooperatives, direct marketing and farmers markets. It means encouraging the use of crops in the production of renewable energy sources. It means providing greater opportunities for farmers in value-added, consumer-ready goods, organics and so on. It means not just "freedom to *farm*" but freedom to *market*. And it means government must be there to help ensure that the markets are free and competitive by actively enforcing our anti-trust and price discrimination laws.

Of course, traditional row crop farming will continue to be the heart of American agriculture. And the government will continue to support the people who grow traditional crops. But a new century calls for a more holistic approach to farm policy, one that reflects and embraces the diversity of American agriculture.

For example, new immigrants from places like Southeast Asia, Africa and Latin America are finding opportunities in agriculture. They're settling not just in Iowa, Nebraska and Kansas but in places like Virginia, Massachusetts and Washington state. And they're growing and -- exporting -- specialty crops like apples, blueberries, strawberries and water spinach. Shouldn't they have the same opportunity for support as traditional heartland row crop producers?

A new farm policy must continue to celebrate farmers, their contribution and their unique role in society. And it must do that by embracing a more complete vision of the American farmer: farmer as effective risk manager...farmer as conscientious land steward...farmer as bold innovator...farmer as resourceful, multi-faceted, flexible businessperson.

Looking ahead to the 21st century that's just begun, the future for agriculture is bright. Within the next quarter century, we expect that there will be 8 billion people on earth, many of them with higher incomes and more varied diets than ever before. A new farm policy can help American farmers reap the benefits of this extraordinary opportunity.

But that new farm policy must be as fair and inclusive as possible. It must go beyond commodity-based programs. It must be national in scope, encompassing more regions, more farmers and more crops. It's time for a farm policy that is focused less on historic crop prices and bureaucratic formulas...and more on *people* and their *dreams*.

Thank you very much.

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REMARKS BY
U.S. SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE DAN GLICKMAN
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[As prepared for delivery]

Thank you Mr. Pooley. I also want to thank Minister Brown and Commissioner Fischler. With me today are Catherine Woteki, Under Secretary for Food Safety, and Isi Siddiqui my Senior Trade Advisor.

I want to begin with the figure \$346 billion. That's the amount of trade, in all sectors, that the United States and the European Union engaged in last year. For agriculture the overall figure was over \$14 billion.

The depth of economic activity between the EU and the United States is one clear reminder that we have a fundamentally strong working relationship - that in most areas we agree far more than we disagree - that we are united in our principles, and that we have come to appreciate and value our alliance and our friendship.

Sixty years ago Winston Churchill said, "We do not covet anything from any nation except their respect." It is the mutual respect between Europe and the United States that has allowed us to work together to move the entire world to a greater level of prosperity, democracy, freedom and peace since the dawn of modern civilization.

In my five years as Secretary of Agriculture, too often I've noticed that a disproportionate amount of our energies - on both sides of the Atlantic - are focused on our differences, on what divides us, and not on what brings us together.

That is why it is important that we remember how far we've come together, because it is from that foundation of mutual respect and cooperation that we will find common ground, that we will solve our differences and meet the problems that threaten each of us. It is from that foundation that we will continue to grow and prosper and create a safer, more humanitarian world.

Today we live in a world marked by a very fast pace of technology that changes our lifestyles, shrinks geographical boundaries and transcends the forces of suppression through open communications the likes of which the world couldn't even imagine even 50 years ago. But for all the satellites and computers, fiber optics and laser technology, one thing hasn't changed: The life of each and every human being on this planet is still in the hands of our farmers and ranchers ... and it will always be that way.

By the middle of the century, world population is expected to top 9 billion people. Depending on your perspective, you can look at that number as providing a daunting challenge to world agriculture, or you can look at it as an opportunity to build on the amazing achievements agriculture has achieved in the last 100 years. How well our farmers and ranchers fare depends on how we meet the many challenges and opportunities facing world agriculture.

In the United States, after the passage of the 1996 Farm Bill, we embarked on a new approach to government's role in farming. It reduces government's role in controlling supply and gives more market freedom to farmers. Government takes a more active role as the partner who focuses on the big picture - in conservation planning, research, trade and market development for example.

But we also recognize that our farmers and ranchers do some of the most back-breaking and most important work there is. It involves extraordinary risk and is often subject to factors way beyond their control. Because of the volatility and unpredictability of agriculture, and because we want to assure a reliable food supply, we want to do what we can to make sure that farmers have the opportunity to survive, and hopefully to prosper.

So, in the United States, we are proposing to provide farmers with an adequate safety net during bad times, but that allows them to fully capitalize on good times.

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Today, farmers and ranchers in the United States and elsewhere are into their third year of severe hardship. Huge inventories, record worldwide production, natural disasters and economic crises in Asia, Latin America and Russia all contributed to dramatic declines in most farm prices.

In the United States, the difficulties hit at a particularly inopportune time because American agriculture was also adjusting to the sweeping changes in farm policy that I mentioned earlier. The crisis was so wide and so deep that Congress had to come up with huge sums to help farmers survive the crises. We were able to provide this aid in a manner that was consistent with our World Trade Organization commitments, but it was a costly, band-aide approach - more patchwork than policy.

So this year, to help avert costly, drastic, inefficient measures in the future, President Clinton wants to develop a farm safety net that protects farmers in times of crisis, that is non-trade-distorting, that is targeted to those who need the help, that allows farmers to plan better for the future, that empowers them to better manage risk, and that helps them to protect the very natural resources that is the source of their livelihood and our food.

The proposals we outlined in the President's budget and asked the Congress to consider are based on redirecting some of the philosophical underpinnings of farm policy. They are designed to be WTO-consistent, to take a long-term perspective, to give farmers better control and thus free them to do what they do best -- grow our food.

And we want to continue to ensure that conservation -- the preservation of our land -- is a centerpiece of farm policy. The land is not something that can be replaced like a piece of machinery. We need to respect it above and beyond its crop-producing capability; we must recognize it for what it is: our most valuable commodity.

Our goal is to prepare our farmers and ranchers for the challenges of the new century. But all of us know that no one nation can make a go of it alone in a world of interdependent economies. We are all faced with conflicting problems in agriculture. On one hand are issues of hunger, malnutrition, sustainability, and providing adequate levels of sustenance in places like sub-Saharan Africa and the rest of the developing world.

On the other hand, we have a big worldwide carryover of stocks resulting in part from good weather, but also from new technologies that have dramatically increased yields and production which has driven prices down and threatens farmers' livelihoods. These issues, coupled with the great shifts in agriculture over the last few decades in production, distribution and marketing have left many farmers and ranchers in a precarious position with an uncertain future.

We need to figure out how to give farmers and ranchers some economic stability, and how to feed a hungry world, but without bankrupting our respective treasuries. This will not be easy. And we need to do it in a manner that is fair and equitable to all participants, and in a way that preserves what we refer to as family-size production agriculture.

In the United States we've made dramatic changes, for example, in trade policy. We had to overcome some domestic resistance to a new wave of trade agreements ushered in by President Clinton that helped lead to unprecedented economic prosperity. And that battle continues. The borders of the United States remain the most open and least trade-restrictive of any major industrialized country in the world.

The EU must overcome similar difficult choices in order to overcome the barriers that will enable strong growth and greater prosperity. Let's be frank, export subsidies in the EU, while they are popular and may seem helpful to those who benefit from them, are inefficient, trade-distorting and in the long-run detrimental to healthy competition which is the lifeblood of a strong economy. What's more, they tend to work against the interests of small, less developed nations who cannot compete with the heavily subsidized commodities exported by countries using export subsidies.

Just look at China: In its move out of economic stagnation, China, recognizing the need for efficiency to boost their economy, has agreed to eliminate all export subsidies as it joins the WTO.

Right now we're in a dog-eat dog battle over subsidies and other trade matters, when we should be coming together to solve some of the more challenging issues facing agriculture. The EU, US and other agriculture producing nations must get together and raise the level of discourse -- away from conflict and more toward resolution -- to discuss in depth the long-term implications of world agriculture policy.

We need to work collaboratively toward better coordination of each country's agricultural policy positions. We also need to find better venues for, not just politicians, but farmers, ranchers and others to discuss our respective problems.

By and large, the problems our farmers face are very, very similar. The economy of agriculture - even in the U.S. - has not kept pace with the outstanding general national economy. None of our farmers will prevail unless we, in the context of a rules based world trading system, work together. It's a long, slow difficult process but I think the result is worth the effort. I find that far too many politicians on both sides of the Atlantic spend far too much precious energy critiquing each other's policies and not nearly enough time working toward constructive compromise.

If you will excuse my phraseology, allow me to quote President Harry Truman who said, "Any jackass can kick down a barn door, but it takes a carpenter to build one." We need a lot more carpenters.

While I am here, I plan to discuss these issues in depth with EU Commissioner Franz Fischler and Agriculture Minister Nick Brown.

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This unprecedented level of interdependence, especially in agriculture, is a result of the rise of the global economy. In my five years as Agriculture Secretary I have seen what trade means to agriculture's bottom line. Early in my tenure, we saw record agricultural exports in the United States reach \$60 billion in a single year. But in the last year and a half, we saw the bottom drop out -- and that has been true for farmers worldwide.

We've all seen how significant trade is to agriculture's bottom line in all of our countries. If our economies are to continue to grow and prosper, then we must look for new markets -- and that means we need an open trading system. Look at the facts: Since 1960, tariffs worldwide have

fallen by 90% while global trade grew 1500% contributing to a quadrupling of world economic production and a doubling of per capita income.

The United States already is among the most open markets in the world. And, at the same time, we have one of the strongest and most prosperous economies in the world. I do not say that to boast, but to point out that a free market is the lifeblood of a healthy economy.

Under the WTO we've made great strides in reducing trade barriers and advancing our goals toward more free and fair trade. As you know, the WTO had a rough time of it last year in Seattle. But, while some are questioning certain WTO rules, operating procedures and policies, few are challenging the basic tenet of the WTO's goals of creating a freer, fairer more open world trading system. A detour in the road does not change our destination. That is why we are working hard to jump start talks on agriculture and services under the built-in agenda of the WTO.

Since the new year, there has been a flurry of diplomatic activity among all participating nations, including developing nations, all with the intention of developing a clear agenda so we can begin talks as soon as possible. I met with the WTO's Director General, Michael Moore, recently, in Washington, and both of us came away from that meeting encouraged that we are making great strides toward getting these talks off the ground.

By facilitating free trade we are enhancing the ability of businesses and consumers in all nations to raise their levels of prosperity. Consider for example, the opportunity now before us to admit China into the World Trade Organization. China is home to 20% of the world's population -- the elephant in the living room none of us can ignore. China's commitment to adhering to WTO standards is a bold statement that they intend to be a major player on the world stage. The Chinese have shown they understand that they must commit to long-standing principles governing world trade -- transparency, fair trade practices, peaceful settlement of disputes and, most importantly, the rule of law.

Now, there are some who object to China's joining the WTO because they're concerned about China's human rights violations, or their lax labor standards, or their aggressive posture toward Taiwan. We share these concerns, and we're addressing them through appropriate channels. But in the long run, the surefire way to ensure that China does not change is to walk away from this relationship. If we want to open nations like China, if we want to expose them to our values...to democratic principles...to the concept of religious freedom...then we have to bring them into a rules-based global system. If we help China become a more open economy, eventually they will become a more open society.

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Along with lifting the entire community of nations, one of the biggest motivations behind pushing for improved trade is to create new opportunities for businesses, farmers and consumers. But expanding opportunities is not just about who you sell to, but what you sell them. Developing new value-added products, specialty crops and new technologies give farmers the opportunity to broaden their base, and give consumers more choice.

Recently I took two significant steps that hopefully will make profound contributions to farmers' ability to broaden their base, and to the choices consumers have. I recently appointed a biotechnology committee to advise me on policy choices affecting this developing science; and this week, I announced a uniform national organic standard defining what qualifies as organic. I might add that it is the strictest and most comprehensive organic rule in the world.

As a society we do not have to choose one over the other. In fact, they both can serve us well. In the United States, we strive to ensure that consumers will always be able to make informed choices and that we maintain the highest standards of safety American consumers have come to expect of American food production.

The fact is biotechnology can be an indispensable tool in meeting growing global agricultural demand while lessening the strain on our precious natural resources. It can also help farmers produce a new generation of specialty products to meet future consumer demand. In fact, populous nations like India and China are already well on their way down that road embracing biotechnology. Reports coming out of China predict that within five to ten years -- that's not a long time -- half of China's fields will be growing GMO crops. Some of the signals I've seen from the European capitals of late suggest that the EU is in danger of falling behind the competition.

But regardless of biotechnology's potential, the consuming public, the private sector, the academic community, the farm community and those of us in government should not be afraid to ask the difficult questions. All of us have to understand the safety and environmental implications of biotechnology. Our testing has to be rigorous. We have to be as vigilant as ever. And we have to make sure that those involved in determining the safety of genetically-engineered products are independent from the people who stand to profit from them.

The regulatory procedures we have in place are not only meeting the challenges of biotechnology, but we are adapting them to grow and develop alongside this new technology. One of the reasons why I appointed a biotechnology policy advisory committee, and why I asked the National Academy of Sciences to create a standing biotechnology committee and to do an independent review of our approval process is in order to keep pace with the rapidly changing

developments of such a relatively new science. We want to ensure that the regulatory processes we rely on to protect public health and the environment are state-of-the-art.

But, there's an aspect to this debate that has been largely overlooked - biotechnology's potential to alleviate hunger and malnourishment in developing countries.

Too often we focus our energies on the priorities of the developed world -- on an ideological debate between commercial and cultural elites: on one hand dwelling on the fear of this new technology, and on the other hand consumed with what it can do for us. To a large extent that debate is short-sighted. With world food and nutrition needs already out of balance and growing exponentially - 800 million people are hungry or undernourished - the current debate risks subverting a technology that can help, even save, the less fortunate around the globe.

I recently read about scientists in Switzerland who developed genetically engineered rice containing beta-carotene, the biochemical that turns into Vitamin A. Vitamin A deficiency is a leading cause of blindness and contributes to childhood illnesses leading to a million deaths a year in the developing world. And the potential is there to develop rice to battle iron deficiency and anemia. This is a particularly important role for government sponsored research.

Unfortunately, this kind of research is the exception rather than the norm because, frankly, it's not profitable. I fear that the raging transatlantic debate over GMOs isn't even considering that which may be biotechnology's legacy - its ability to feed a rapidly growing world population and enhance global food security in an environmentally sustainable way. I think it would be good if all of us moved away from a dispute that focuses on the "haves" and consider the implications of biotechnology for the "have-nots."

But, for any technology, new or old, we must insist that everything we do -- every step we take -- is based on sound science. Knowing that there is a strong, science-based, regulatory regime assuring the safety of the products we allow on the market, gives us the freedom to choose, innovate, experiment, be bold, and to open our minds to new possibilities.

By way of example, let me discuss an area in which the EU and the US disagree, and where sound scientific research should prevail. We continue to seek a speedy resolution to our dispute over the EU's ban on U.S. beef. Decades of worldwide scientific studies have convincingly demonstrated that consumption of beef from animals produced with the six approved growth-promotants does not pose a risk to human health. The United States is asking the EU to comply with its WTO commitments by lifting the ban on these products. I do want to commend the government and scientists of the UK for taking the lead and applying sound scientific principles

in concluding that these products, when used responsibly, are safe. Following the UK's lead would provide EU consumers with the same safe choice given American consumers.

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It is clear that we have many shared goals. It is clear that we have a lot in common. It is also clear that we have some differences. And you know, we're going to find a way to solve them, because our mutual history is proof-positive that our friendship has been very fruitful.

But I'm not saying anything new here. Ever since the New World was settled, we've had our disagreements. But we've learned from those experiences. All of our nations have benefitted from working together, from mutual trust and respect. I promise you, we will work through our differences. We will. And the consumers, and the men and women of world agriculture, will be better off for it. Thank you.

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**REMARKS BY
U.S. SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE DAN GLICKMAN
COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS
GEORGETOWN PUBLIC POLICY INSTITUTE
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Thank you very much, Dean Feder, for that kind introduction. I know that you're doing outstanding work here at Georgetown, but your presence and your health care expertise have been sorely missed in the Clinton Administration.

I want to single out two of today's graduates who have spent some time working with us at the Department of Agriculture. Alexis Weaver was one of our Woodrow Wilson fellows, and Kristin Braun, among other things, was a part of our successful outreach effort to secure passage of Permanent Normal Trade Relations with China. We're grateful to both of them for their hard work.

As a father who is immensely proud of his adult children, I feel compelled to mention the parents and other family members who are here today. No doubt, it is your support – financial and otherwise – through the years that has made this day possible for your sons and daughters.

Since this is a sophisticated, intelligent group of future policymakers, I thought about talking today about some of the major policy challenges facing us at the Department of Agriculture. Perhaps, I thought, I would give you my thoughts about the new farm policy paradigm I believe we need to adopt in the coming years. Some people thought I should talk about what the soy program should look like. Or maybe I could discuss the burning issue of food biotechnology ...and the importance of balancing scientific progress with public health and safety concerns.

But all that seemed a little too heavy for a Friday morning before a holiday weekend. And then I realized that the most important things I could tell you are not about the nuances of policymaking. That you will learn by doing. My advice is much simpler, and I believe it's something you'll need no matter how impressive your credentials, regardless of the depth of your knowledge.

The first piece of advice is *listen*. Listen to your colleagues, and listen to your adversaries. Listen to your superiors and your mentors, but listen also to the waiter or waitress who serves your dinner or the man or woman who paints your house. Be on the lookout for your own elitism. A graduate degree doesn't mean you've cornered the market on good ideas. I've learned that the public is a lot smarter than the media often gives them credit for.

As a member of Congress, I made it a point to be very diligent about listening to the half a million people who had the power to renew or terminate my contract every other November. I used to go into the office on weekends, driving my staff crazy, to spend time actually opening and reading the mail. I wanted to get that sense of constituent sentiment without any filter. Sure,

my staff could report to me on the mail. But reading it myself gave me a window into people's thoughts, and it absolutely influenced my decision-making as a legislator.

Of course, sometimes when you listen, you don't like what you hear. After I lost my bid for reelection in 1994, I couldn't help but think about an old line from Congressman Morris Udall: "The public has spoken... the bastards."

But it's not just elected officials who have to listen. Although I have the authority to issue new regulations as Secretary of Agriculture, nothing sees the light of day until it goes through an exhaustive public comment period. Last year, we came out with a draft rule that would establish a definition of organic food. And boy did we hear it from people. We received an unprecedented 275,000 comments, many of them quite critical. But we listened; we changed the standards; and now are working toward a revised, improved rule...one that can be publicly embraced...one that meets the very exacting standard of the organic farming community.

In any policy environment, no matter what the issue and no matter which side you're on, you have got to listen. The hot debate over biotechnology over the last few years is a case study in the perils of closed-mindedness...and closed ears. On one side, you had large seed companies and their advocates who just assumed that consumers would embrace genetically modified foods. Theirs was a kind of "if we build it they will come" attitude. They hadn't properly explained the enormous potential benefits of these new food varieties. They didn't *listen* to consumer concerns.

The anti-biotechnology activists haven't been much better, using the most outlandish rhetoric and tactics to make their case, destroying plots of biotech crops, accusing corporations of trying to "capture the evolutionary process and...reshape life on Earth to suit its balance sheets," as one advertisement put it. They didn't listen either. They were talking...and largely on their own behalf, not for any broad coalition.

The loser in this whole battle is, of course, the consumer, who is seeking out useful information about genetically modified foods...who wants to have its questions answered...but can't make an informed judgment amid the noisy spin.

I'm not trying to discourage you from conviction or advocacy. Nor am I advising you to be a prisoner of public opinion. Just be conscious of what other people are saying. Look for common ground where, at first, you thought none existed. ***You can be responsive without being a demagogue. You can have your finger on the pulse without holding your finger to the wind.***

My second piece of advice is a corollary of the first. When you listen, you can't help but *learn*. Don't lock yourself into notions that your professional or intellectual course has already been charted, without any possibility of detour. Today's expertise may turn out to be tomorrow's afterthought. And the issues you have avoided at all costs may turn out to be a focal point later in your career.

Here I am, Secretary of Agriculture, and I tell you I was older than many of you before I knew the first thing about farm policy. The only background I had in food and agriculture came from having a Jewish mother who was always telling me: "Eat! Eat!"

It was only when I ran for Congress that I realized I had to get up-to-speed on farm issues. So I gathered a group of farmers together and very humbly explained that I wanted to learn more about their business, because it was so important to the local economy. And I explained that I was a novice, that I had never even pushed a tractor in my life. So one of the farmers spoke up and said: "Well, young man, the first thing you need to understand is: you don't *push* a tractor, you *ride* one." So I learned, and agriculture turned out to be the defining issue of my public life.

Learn as much as you can about a lot of different things. You don't have to choose between being a generalist and a specialist. You can be a jack of all trades and still master some.

Believe me, when I took this job, even with nearly two decades of experience on the House Agriculture Committee, I didn't know everything I needed to know. In order to better understand grain marketing, I had to learn more about rails and transportation. To be a better advocate for farmers in overseas markets, I had to become more of a trade policy specialist. I also had to brush up on food safety, which is an important part of our mandate, as well as hunger issues, since the Agriculture Department manages all federal nutrition programs. So I listened, and I learned. And five years into the job, I'm still listening and still learning.

The third lesson I want to impart is about *friendships* and *relationships*. Look around at your classmates, and remember that these are the people you will need down the line, whether it's for support on a key issue...whether it's to put out feelers when you're looking to switch jobs...whether it's in some fundraising effort you might be involved in. You have here a built-in network that you should continue to cultivate.

I remember the day in January, 1977 when I was one of several new members being sworn into the House of Representatives. And they line you up alphabetically. So there I'm standing with the rest of the G's. And I turn to one side...and there's a very earnest fellow named Gore. I turn to the other side, and there's this impressive, very youthful-looking guy from St. Louis named Gephardt. I used to tell the two of them - well, I'm glad at least one of us made good.

Elsewhere in the class, we have a brilliant budget analyst from California, Leon Panetta, a fierce populist from Michigan, David Bonior, and a powerful, snappy speaker from Baltimore, Barbara Mikulski.

And I'm thinking to myself...*I'd better get to know these folks*. I did, and within 15 years, Gephardt and Bonior had risen to the top of the House Democratic leadership. And when I was on the short list to be Secretary of Agriculture, it sure didn't hurt that I had nearly two decades of friendship with both Vice President Gore and White House Chief of Staff Panetta.

Friendship is the oil that knocks the kinks out of the policy-making process. What compels people to join forces on a matter of public policy? Does the issue itself matter, whether or not there is agreement on goals and outcome? Of course. Does politics play a role? Quite often, it does. But as often as not, it's about the *personal* politics, the relationships. It's about whom you trust...whom you believe...who keeps his or her word. It may even be about who owes what favor to whom...who bailed you out when you had a problem...or who invited you to dinner when your family was out of town.

Right now you're probably saying to yourself: "Oh my God, I just spent the last two years of my life mastering quantitative methods, and this guy is telling me that success depends on how many backs I can slap." Don't get me wrong. Knowledge is power. There's no substitute for what you've learned here. But you need both. You need the knowledge and the substantive background, but you have to complement them with strong personal relationships.

Of course, it's easier to be friends with like-minded people. Building relationships with rivals can be more of a challenge. But I would argue that it's even more important. Because at the heart of great policymaking is the ability to build less-than-conventional coalitions. The person you're trying to beat today may be the key ally you need tomorrow. That's the key to success for members of any legislative body. So don't let your political adversaries become personal antagonists.

Over the last decade, I think we've lost much of that credo. More so than at any other time in my career, animosity and recrimination seem to be driving forces in the body politic. And I don't think it's a coincidence that the more contentious the public dialogue has become, the less successful we've been at solving the nation's most deeply entrenched problems.

Bob Dole and I sparred a lot over the years. We were both very competitive Kansas politicians. One of my first political experiences was my work for Senator Dole's opponent in his 1974 reelection campaign. Twice, Bob Dole was on his party's presidential ticket, and twice I did everything I could to defeat him. I even considered running against him for the Senate a couple of times. But we never let those political differences fracture the mutual, personal respect we shared. As fellow Kansans, it would have been irresponsible of us to bicker with each other instead of cooperating on those issues that mattered to our state. And you better believe that when I was nominated to be Secretary of Agriculture, it came in handy to have the Senate Majority Leader as a long-time friend from my own state.

That relationship continues. Senator Dole will join me next week at USDA for the National Nutrition Summit, where we'll recognize the role he played in building our federal nutrition safety net. And he and I are working with former Senator George McGovern on a joint effort to take what we know about fighting hunger at home and see if we can apply it abroad.

As a Congressman, I also made it a point to be on friendly terms with Republican presidential administrations. I remember taking my mother to the White House to meet President Bush. And

the President shakes my mother's hand and tells her that he likes me and wishes that I would *convert* – meaning from the Democratic to the Republican party. And my mother, without missing a beat, says: "Oh no, we're very happy being Jewish."

That story brings me to my final piece of advice – *you've got to have a sense of humor in this world*. That doesn't necessarily mean you have to be a jokester or some sort of weird character. But you have to be able to appreciate the humor -- even occasionally, the absurdity -- of things that happen. It may make you better at your job, but more importantly, it will help keep your blood pressure down. I've seen too many people burn out from the heat of their own self-importance. It is possible to take your work seriously, without taking yourself too seriously.

How else but with a sense of humor -- or at least a sense of irony -- can you be a Jewish Secretary of Agriculture advocating for the pork industry?

A few years ago, when I was in Rome for the United Nations World Food Summit, I was greeted by anti-biotechnology protesters, all of them completely naked, who threw genetically modified soybeans at me. A few months later, I was in Montana, where an animal rights activist pelted me with rotting bison guts, also known, rather appropriately, as "offal."

Now, in the culture we live in, many people would consider these incidents grounds for legal action. But really, they were funny. To see it any other way would indicate a kind of joylessness that I believe handicaps people who are in important decision-making positions.

I'll tell you one other story. Every time the President gives the State of the Union Address, there's one member of the Cabinet who doesn't go to the Capitol with him, just in case something should happen. So one year, I was the one, meaning I was sort of President for a day. So I went up to New York that night to visit my daughter, and I got the whole treatment – the codes, the doctors, the Secret Service and everything. So I'm watching the speech in my daughter's apartment, and when it's over the phone rings, and a Secret Service agent says: "Mr. Glickman, the mission is terminated." And then I spent the rest of the evening in a rainstorm trying to get a cab back to the airport.

Earlier this year, I was dared by Craig Kilborn, the guy who has the show following David Letterman, to be one of his guests. This was right after Hillary Clinton had appeared with Letterman, and Kilborn went on the air and said basically: forget Hillary Clinton...I'm going to get *Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman* on my show...as if I were the most obscure person on the face of the earth. And for a few nights in a row, he reissues this challenge and puts a picture of me up on the screen.

Now, I know a lot of people in public life who wouldn't dream of taking him up on the offer for fear that they'd just end up being fodder for this guy's smart-aleck routine. But I called him up, told him I'd be in L.A. the following week, and let's do it. And he and I had a good banter. His curiosity about agriculture was limited to questions about the difference between hemp and

marijuana. But essentially it was harmless fun.

Now, this experience didn't help make any meaningful policy or anything. But I think that when you're able to laugh at yourself a little, it sends a message that you're approachable and accessible...that you're the kind of person people can easily work with. And it makes work -- and life -- a little easier and a little more fun.

You've gotten the best possible training here at Georgetown for the work you're about to do. But don't substitute your expertise for what you know about *people*. It's *people* that produce white papers, budget analyses and GAO reports. Their quirks and their subtle biases all seep into the work they do. You must be just as astute an observer of these aspects as you are of the substance of your work.

Look at our President. I don't know that I've ever seen anyone who better combined a mastery of policy detail with absolutely uncanny people skills, whether he's dealing with a foreign head of state or a homeless family. You don't have to be the President -- or a politician at all -- for congeniality to work for you.

It may not always seem so, but this world of public policy is the *real world*. It isn't some parallel universe, some bizarre-o world, where different rules about human relations apply. So ultimately, the lessons for policymaking aren't very different than the lessons for life. Listen. Learn. Laugh. Be fair, kind and considerate of others.

These are some of the lessons that Robert Fulghum preached in his best-seller: *All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten*. Now, I don't think you learn it all in kindergarten. It's not that simple. You constantly re-learn it throughout your life. Every day, you pick up more tips about human nature. Every day, you're reminded of the benefits of serving up more honey than vinegar. And eventually you become both a better person and a better professional.

Thank you very much, and the best of luck to all of you.

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**REMARKS OF
AGRICULTURE SECRETARY DAN GLICKMAN**

THE NATIONAL NUTRITION SUMMIT

WASHINGTON, DC

May 30, 2000

Thank you Secretary Shalala. Good morning. It's an honor to be here with Secretary Shalala, Ambassador McGovern and Senator Dole. I want to thank Secretary Shalala for her leadership and her passion. I'm proud of the work that USDA and HHS have been doing together over the years to meet the nutrition and health challenges we face. Both agencies are doing a terrific job.

Before I begin, I bring a message from a very special person who couldn't be here today.

[VIDEO TAPE FROM THE PRESIDENT]

Even when he's on tape, he's a tough act to follow - but I'll do my best.

I know I speak for everyone in the Administration when I say how proud we all are to work for President Clinton and Vice President Gore who, for over seven years, have been committed to improving food security, nutrition and health for every American.

I want to welcome our two very special guests -- Ambassador George McGovern and Senator Robert Dole. They have been the guiding lights shepherding the many programs that make up the nation's nutrition safety net. Senator Dole and I are old friends and adversaries from Kansas so I can say first hand, he was there on the front lines. Ambassador McGovern's presence here today is a reminder that, although this is a national summit, the issues we'll be examining over the next two days resonate far beyond our borders.

Also with us today, and I'd like them to stand are members of the Girl Scouts of America along with their National Executive Director Marsha Evans. The Girl Scouts have made good health and nutrition a top priority. In fact they've designed a new badge with the food guide pyramid on it. I also want to say that good citizenship is also one of their priorities. They help out in many ways feeding the hungry and caring for the elderly. I want to thank them for setting an example for all Americans to follow.

I also want to take a moment to single out the folks whose vision and tenacity made this summit happen. A special thanks to the two co-chairs of the summit's steering committee, Eileen Kennedy, USDA's Deputy Under Secretary for Research, Education and Economics, and from HHS Paul Coates, NIH's Director of Dietary Supplements. I also want to mention others from USDA, Julie Paradis, Deputy Under Secretary for Food and Nutrition, Ed Cooney my Special Assistant for Nutrition and Rajen Anand, Director of the Center for Nutrition and Promotion who

worked so hard with HHS on the dietary guidelines.

I also want to thank Shirley Watkins, Under Secretary for Food and Nutrition and Miley Gonzalez, Under Secretary for Research, Education and Economics two champions of pushing the envelope, of challenging the status quo. They understood that, to move on to the next tier of nutrition, health and hunger challenges we have to lay a foundation for the future much the way our forerunners did with the first summit in 1969.

It is thanks to all of you in this room and your remarkable predecessors that we made so much progress since the original summit. Over the past three decades you have pushed the limits, expanded the notion of what government and society can and should do to ensure that every person in America has the basic necessities for adequate nutrition and health. We all know that the job is not done. Your achievements are truly remarkable and I think it would be very appropriate for you to give yourselves and each other a round of applause. You deserve it.

There are those from the leave-well-enough-alone camp who say our mission is accomplished, federal nutrition policy is doing fine as it is. "After all," they ask, "haven't we achieved what we set out to do in 1969?"

Well frankly the answer is -- somewhat.

Since 1969 we've made great advances in dealing with hunger and malnutrition. But we're not here today to look back, or to rest on our laurels. Rather, our purpose is to tackle that sense of complacency, to lay before the American people the contemporary issues and challenges in food insecurity, nutrition and health. We must raise awareness of the need to revitalize national nutrition policy and to infuse it with a greater sense of purpose.

Our task is twofold. First, we must look to the short-term and find ways to improve what we're already doing.

We need to communicate the information in the new dietary guidelines to the American people. We must make sure that people are made aware of the guidelines, understand what they mean, and know how to apply them to their lives.

These guidelines reflect the latest in scientific knowledge on nutrition and health. They recommend that all Americans use the food guide pyramid to make informed food choices, choosing a balanced diet that includes a variety of grains fruits and vegetables everyday. They also encourage all Americans to moderate how much saturated fat, cholesterol, total fat, sugars, salt and alcohol are in their diets. And for the first time, the guidelines recommend a steady dose of physical activity.

Just as the guidelines help people to make informed dietary choices, so too does nutrition labeling, which American consumers have whole-heartedly embraced. So today I'm proud to

announce that very shortly USDA will issue standards for mandatory nutrition labels on packaged meat and poultry products. That means that when consumers buy hamburger or pork chops or chicken breasts they will be getting the same nutrition information – calories, cholesterol and so on – that they've come to rely on for processed foods.

We also need to make sure that the various federal nutrition programs are reaching the many millions of people who need them. For example, food stamps, the anchor of the nutrition safety net, helps 17 million people a year -- but there are still 10 million people who are eligible to participate in the program but do not. We need to make food stamps more readily available to these people. We should remove the barrier that disqualifies people for food stamps if they own a reliable car. We should allow law-abiding, tax-paying, legal immigrants the same eligibility requirements as that for citizens. We need to do better at informing those who need help that it's there for the asking.

This summer Under Secretary Shirley Watkins will be going on a seven city tour to hold a national conversation with everyone from nutritionists to retailers, from educators to farmers, from administrators to food stamp recipients to learn how we can make the program better, simpler, more accessible and more nutritious.

The second part of our task involves taking the long-range perspective – providing a road map for future nutrition policy.

At the heart of any future policy has to be two issues which at first glance seem contradictory: hunger and obesity. On the one hand we have millions of people who sometimes don't even know where their next meal is coming from. On the other hand, as the President noted, 55% of the American people are overweight or obese, 1 in 5 of them children. These problems are in fact two sides of the same coin. For millions of families, when they don't have enough money to buy food, they go hungry. But, when they have only a little money, they tend to buy low-cost foods which may or may not have all the nutrients they need. So our challenge isn't only to ensure that people have enough food to eat, but that they have the resources and access to enough of the right foods.

What we've learned about obesity is an example of the unprecedented level of knowledge we've achieved about the relationship between diet and disease – how what we eat can increase or decrease the risk of heart problems, diabetes, stroke, arthritis, cancer and other diseases. We've also seen how major changes in our lifestyles affect what and how much we eat and how much physical activity we get. Yet we can't seem to convert all that nutritional knowledge into changed behaviors. The fact is only 12% of the American people have a good diet. Why? Why do we keep reaching for those extra large orders of french fries when we know too much fat is a form of slow poison. It's like we know there's a red light in front of us, but we go through it anyway. But why?

To be perfectly frank, I'd like to know the answers myself. Let's face it, I'm coming to you from

the do-as-I-say-not-as-I-do camp. I'd like to know why I sometimes choose the high-fat donut over the no-fat bagel, or why I go back for those extra helpings even though I'm really not hungry anymore. We need to be candid about the challenges each individual faces.

To find answers to these and other vexing questions, today I'm announcing the USDA Behavioral Nutrition Initiative. This initiative will use USDA's extensive research capabilities to help find out why people make the food and exercise choices they do. And equally as important, it will explore how we can take what we learn and use it to get people to make new choices for a healthier lifestyle. Through a comprehensive program beginning this summer involving USDA's Human Nutrition Research Centers, the Economic Research Service, our extension program and our own staff researchers, we will examine everything from the influences of income on food choices, to barriers to behavioral change, to developing foods with certain health characteristics.

We cannot be afraid to be creative and enter uncharted territories. For example our ability to educate our kids is on everybody's minds these days. Many people don't realize that some of the important education and school discipline issues can, in part, be addressed by ensuring that each child is well-fed and ready to learn each and every day. A few weeks ago I announced the start of a School Breakfast pilot program in six school districts to test the effects of universal breakfasts on kids' ability to learn throughout the day - a program I would like to see made available in all schools.

Also, we should not limit the goals of existing nutrition programs. So let's look beyond merely delivering food through our nutrition programs, but also knowledge about food and exercise and what it means to overall health. Arming kids with nutritional knowledge is critical because habits learned early in life generally last a lifetime.

We also need to develop a better understanding of what resonates with the public and provide people with the answers they seek. In February, USDA hosted a Great Nutrition Debate, which featured some of the popular diet doctors. We wanted to examine why, when the body of scientific evidence is so weighted in the direction of a balanced diet and physical exercise, are so many Americans making food choices based on theories, myths and inadequate research?

I wasn't as surprised as I was intrigued by the level of interest generated by the debate. People want to do something about being overweight, and from what I've seen, they're willing to try just about anything. Why these weight-loss diets remain so popular remains a source of extreme curiosity.

I suspect that one reason is the paucity of reliable scientific research available on the various diets. There doesn't seem to be enough comprehensive information specific to these diets to counter the claims made by their promoters. If there was any consensus coming out of the Great Nutrition Debate, it's that we need more answers.

That's why USDA, through our Human Nutrition Research Centers, is embarking on a

coordinated research program to examine the effects of popular weight-loss diets. We will summarize existing scientific literature and conduct a series of studies on the health and nutrition effects of the various types of popular diets.

But perhaps the most vexing long-term challenge is one that has been with us for centuries – simply making sure everyone has enough nutritious food on the table. We live in the most prosperous, most agriculturally abundant nation on earth and, thanks to President Clinton and Vice President Gore, we are enjoying the greatest economic prosperity in history. Yet many Americans continue to be plagued by a new kind of hunger. It is a more subtle kind that doesn't generate powerful visual images. I'm talking about the child that is put to bed early on an empty stomach because there's no food in the house; or the struggles of the working poor – good decent folks who work hard, even sometimes at two jobs, but still can't meet the basic nutritional needs of their families. I'm talking about the people who have to choose between a roof over their heads or food on the table.

Our federal nutrition programs are at the core of combating this problem. But we're at a crossroads. We've learned that government cannot do it alone. That's why I want to see more communities step up to the plate and participate in USDA's Community Food Security Initiative and explore grass roots solutions to this problem. Making sure every one of their neighbors have enough nutritious food to eat should be a badge of pride for every community in America. I mean, wouldn't it be wonderful if, as you traveled across America, each time you entered a town or community, they had a sign boasting that you are now entering a food secure zone?

I know it might be blasphemous to say this, but I'd like to see a time where we don't need such a vast nutrition safety net -- where poverty isn't the determining factor in so many people's lives - - where every parent can provide the basic necessities for every family. That's why this Administration is working hard to help create opportunity for those who are somehow being left out of the current economic boom.

The charge of federal nutrition policy is not to solve the problem but to alleviate its symptoms. We need anti-hunger programs because we have hungry people. But, at the risk of sounding like an idealist, it doesn't have to be that way. As a nation we must continue to work toward eliminating the root cause of hunger - poverty -- and we shouldn't stop until we succeed.

Ever since I've been in public life – right at the beginning when I was on the School Board in Wichita, through my years in Congress and now as Agriculture Secretary, fighting hunger has always been a priority for me. And I know all of you feel this way as well. Winston Churchill said, "A fanatic is someone who can't change his mind and won't change the subject." When it comes to ending hunger, I think it's probably safe to say that everyone in this room is a fanatic and proud of it. We can't let up. We've come a long way in 30 years, but we've still got a long way to go. Let's keep the foot on the pedal -- and floor it. Thank you.

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CIVIL RIGHTS 2000: A CONTINUING JOURNEY

remarks

by

U.S. Agriculture Secretary
Dan Glickman

Washington, DC
June 29, 2000

Thank you Pearlle for your leadership and for your guidance on this very important subject.

Good morning. Thank you all for coming. This was a good opportunity to get together because human relations and civil rights folks from all over the country were in town this week. I've called you all together to talk about the state of civil rights at *our* USDA-- the state of our efforts to foster *good human relations* at the people's department.

Since we released our progress report on civil rights in May, I've been thinking about our effort -- what we set out to do, what we've achieved, what continues to haunt us and what more needs to be done.

Sometimes people don't see civil rights as something that affects them. But if you look at civil rights as part of a larger issue -- human relations -- then it becomes more tangible to everyone. It's about how people get along and how people treat each other. It's not just about blatant acts of discrimination. It's about human understanding; it's about communicating; it's about taking a moment to grasp someone else's perspective who just sees things a little bit differently. Civil rights -- human rights -- begin and end with our personal conviction to treat each other with respect. *How we treat each other defines who we are.*

The fact is that seven years ago civil rights wasn't a priority of this Department. And, quite frankly, when I was a member of Congress and on the House Agriculture Committee, USDA's civil rights issues weren't on the radar screen there either.

So we began this journey together, and now, today, I want to take a measure of where we are and where we've yet to go.

Our accomplishments are varied, and I believe significant. We've increased farm loans to women and minorities. We're reaching out to minority owned businesses through various partnerships. And last year we awarded \$300 million in contracts to socially disadvantaged and minority firms -- nearly 10% of the total. And right now we're in the midst of completing what may be the largest civil rights settlement in our nation's history -- hundreds of millions of dollars -- to African American farmers.

Part of solving the civil rights dilemma means having better representation of minorities and women. So, even while we've downsized USDA's workforce by 15% we've *increased* representation of women, African-Americans, Hispanics, Asian Pacific Islanders, American Indians. And we've got more minorities and women serving on county committees. But, while that's a good start, I want to see even more diversity.

Our civil rights office has been expanded to not only deal with complaints – which I will talk more about later – but to reach out to minorities, and to train managers and employees in civil rights issues. *And we are disciplining civil rights offenders – 94 cases in the last 18 months.*

We also need to consider the intangibles, the progress we've made that cannot be measured in numbers. Do people feel good about coming to work? Are they more comfortable here? I believe *on balance things are far better than they've ever been*, even four or five years ago. But frankly, *it needs to get a whole lot better.*

Even so, what I will not stand for is anyone – whatever their perspective or beliefs, whatever side they're on – who disparages, in word or deed, *the good work and good hearts of the vast majority of the people of USDA. That is just plain wrong.*

Civil rights and good human relations takes work, day in and day out. When it comes to people getting along with each other, our work is never finished. It's the kind of battle that needs to be fought over and over again. And, *there are no easy answers.* Someone once said that for every problem there is a simple and wrong solution. If there were a simple answer, I think we would have found it by now.

It is clear that you can't make progress without a strong civil rights structure in place. But at times some employees and customers feel that too often this Department is drowning in process – that while discrimination continues to rear its ugly head, we're caught up in rules, regulations and procedures -- *when what they want is action and answers.*

We all need to coexist. Putting reliable systems in place is important, but we cannot let process mute the need to understand the human element – the need for people to be heard and listened to. And we must not view our civil rights effort as a program to be completed in a finite time frame – implement it and then we're done – like making grants, disaster payments or putting out a forest fire.

We should not be caught up only in process. Our employees and customers want and deserve actions and answers. We must be positive, constructive and work toward a better future. To do so means *we need to be both tough and compassionate.*

Martin Luther King said, "We must combine the toughness of the serpent and the softness of the dove, a tough mind and a tender heart." For the tender heart, I would say we all need to pause and reexamine our own attitudes and those of our coworkers. We need to understand that civil

rights is about human relations. We need to understand that even as most of us celebrate our diversity – the melting pot that is America – there are those who fear diversity and are threatened by others who are different. It's not fair, but it's a reality. We also need to understand that there are those who want to help, who want to change things, who want to solve these problems, whose hearts are in the right place, but they don't know how. ***We must show each other the way.***

For the toughness of the serpent I would say we need to strengthen our systems, our programs and civil rights enforcement. We need to ***set a benchmark***, a baseline to which future managers, future Secretaries and future Administrations will be held accountable. ***However, establishing policy means nothing without meaningful execution.*** But because USDA is a very decentralized organization -- much more so than most federal agencies and departments -- it is the responsibility of every under secretary, every administrator, every manager in every county ***to ensure that the civil rights policies of this department are carried out.***

Let's be frank, there's going to be a new Secretary here next year, and another one sometime after that. I want you to know ***I'm going to sit down with my successor and I'm going to lay it out*** -- exactly what we've done, exactly where USDA is headed and the institutional structure that we've put in place to deal with civil rights. There is no turning back. The employees of USDA won't have it any other way. We have made it a policy that every employee and customer be treated fairly – we put civil rights at USDA on the map – we made civil rights enforcement a priority – and nobody can take that away. That is the standard we've set against which all future managers will be measured. But it is also a standard that every employee of the department and the next Administration must carry on.

Today, I'm taking several actions to further enhance our ability to enforce civil rights and improve human relations.

I'll begin with requiring greater accountability. There's a perception out there that some people can use the settlement process to avoid disciplinary action -- sort of like a no-fault divorce. No harm, no foul kind of thing. That's a problem and we have to fix it. We need to make sure that bad actors can't manipulate the system and manage to slip under the radar. But at the same time we don't want to deter people from using our settlement process to resolve claims. So today I'm announcing that all civil rights settlements will automatically be referred to agency human resources people who will decide what, if any, further action to take – with bigger cases kicked upstairs for review at the Department level.

I want to take a moment to talk about performance evaluations. In theory, issues concerning civil rights and human relations are considered a critical element of these evaluations. But in fact, these areas are sometimes given cursory consideration. In many cases people have come to expect an outstanding or exceeds rating as an entitlement when it should be earned. I expect our managers to rigorously review evaluations of civil rights and human relations performance in the same way they review any other job requirement – from getting to work on time to getting the paper work done. I also expect the most senior managers of our department to monitor this; and

their oversight will be a part of their review process as well.

Next, as the inspector general's report indicated, our Office of Civil Rights has been unable to handle the sheer volume of complaints. In fact, there are over 600 claims that haven't even gotten past the first step. So, today I am directing the Office of Civil Rights to hire outside contractors to review these claims and determine whether they should be moved to phase two -- investigation. ***We need to get this process moving, and if bringing in outside help is what we've got to do, then that's what we'll do.***

But taking action to more quickly resolve existing complaints is only addressing part of the problem. We need to find out why we're getting these complaints in the first place. I would expect that each agency would have investigated the reasons why this is happening, why there's a high concentration of complaints in some areas. So today I'm announcing an experiment. We are going to select three or four geographical areas from different agencies with high volumes of complaints where I will send an outside investigatory team with a mandate to get answers and report back directly to me. These will be outside, objective investigators brought in to find answers and hopefully offer up some solutions.

One of the biggest concerns I'm getting from talking to managers and employees is that many minority employees feel that they are not being heard, that nobody cares, that they've got nowhere to air their grievances -- and that ***many employees fear that they may be subject to retaliation or reprisal.*** That tells me that our managers are not always doing their jobs, that our various agencies don't have the proper systems in place where people feel they can get some action. So employees grievances are sometimes left to fester. ***We need early intervention.*** Once again, this is not something that can be dealt with from high up. We also need everyone to understand that mediation and alternative dispute resolution can be very effective ways of resolving conflicts at early stages. Also, employee unions in many agencies have been effective in providing a structure for resolving problems before they fester. We need to pay attention to our employee representatives and we should renew our commitment to working with our Partnership Councils. But, most of all, this is an on-the-ground issue. Every agency, every county, every office needs to find a way to deal with issues of human relations before they get out of hand. This morning your under secretaries will be leading breakout sessions, where I'd like you to begin to explore ways that we can solve problems early.

I also want to make sure that we continue to address employees concerns at the Department level. So we're going to expand a process that is already working in some areas. We already have two minority advisory committees, one representing Hispanics and one representing people with disabilities. They have worked out quite well -- giving these communities a voice and another place to go with their concerns. Today I'm announcing the formation of five more employee advisory committees -- one each for African Americans, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, Native Americans, women, and gays and lesbians. In addition, these seven advisory committees will each send two representatives to a Diversity Council which I will charter for the purposes of advising me on issues important to these groups.

Deputy Secretary Rominger and I and some of my senior staff will attend the breakout sessions. Part of the agenda of these sessions is for you to give us feedback, to talk to us about the problems and the successes. I especially want you to share with us and among yourselves *what is working and what you've tried*. That's how we're going to advance our cause, step by step. But I don't look at these breakout sessions as some be-all end-all. They are part of a process, a process that I want to see all of us develop together.

In closing, I want to remind you that we here at USDA are part of a greater whole -- that whole being our great nation. Next week, on Independence Day, we will celebrate some of our most cherished democratic values -- liberty, freedom, justice -- a good time perhaps to reflect on what I've talked about today. And it's worth noting that the problems we have at USDA are reflective of our society as a whole -- things are improving, but not fast enough. The Civil Rights Act was passed in 1964. Things are a whole lot better today than they were then, but there are still deeply entrenched, complex, emotional problems.

Civil rights is not just a USDA issue. Corporations, schools, communities are all dealing with it. I'm reminded of a passage from the Book of Proverbs, "For as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." In that sense, I believe that as a society we've come a long way, that we do treat each other better than we once did, that we are making progress at improving human relations. But the proverb reminds us that who we are and how we act is rooted deep down inside each and everyone of us. So in another sense, as human beings and how we treat each other we've got a long way to go.

The work we do here is critical. We help our farmers and ranchers provide food security for our citizens unparalleled anywhere else in the world. Through programs like WIC and Food Stamps, we provide the life's basic essentials to people who have no other place to turn. Our firefighters throw themselves in harm's way to protect life and property. Our food safety inspectors, two of whom were murdered in the line of duty last week, ensure that the meat and poultry on American dinner tables is safe to eat.

With all of these critical functions and more, some of them involving life and death, we simply cannot afford to allow civil rights problems to compromise the work we do here. So while this is about justice, it's also about our ability to meet our obligations to the American people.

Each of us must make the commitment to go out and make this a better place to work and make this society a better place to live. There's nothing new in what I'm saying here. But civil rights -- and human relations in general -- is such a monumental struggle, that the message needs to be repeated -- we need to constantly renew our commitment. Attention to civil rights and human relations at USDA must be a part of our job every day, every hour, every minute. A USDA that shows the way on civil rights will not only be a better place to work...it will be a better-working place...one that is true to its name: the People's Department. Thank you.

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**REMARKS BY
U.S. SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE DAN GLICKMAN
UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL
JULY 17, 2000 - NEW YORK, NY**

[As prepared for delivery]

Thank you very much, Ambassador Holbrooke, for that very kind introduction and for having me here today. I want to also thank Under Secretary-General Desai, Ambassador Niehaus, Ambassador King and others for making this possible. I'm pleased to join these other distinguished panelists to celebrate half a century of UN international development cooperation. Whether it's forestry, natural disaster mitigation, immunization, workers' rights, education or any other development issue, the UN has been in the vanguard of efforts to improve quality of life - and save lives - around the globe.

Let me also commend ECOSOC for using this session to explore the role of information technology in international development efforts. At the U.S. Department of Agriculture, with our domestic rural development efforts, we have found that assistance with physical infrastructure, housing, water systems, and so on is only the beginning. Isolated, underserved communities need access to state-of-the-art information tools if they are going to find their place in the global economy of the 21st century. And they need tools and technologies that are tailored to their particular needs. When it comes to development, there is no one-size-fits-all.

I'm very excited also about the soon-to be-established UN Forum on Forests and the contribution it can make to international development strategies.

I believe I'm the first United States Secretary of Agriculture to address the Economic and Social Council, and I'm pleased to have that honor. Because, as an American, I believe in the critical role our nation must play in international development efforts. And as U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, I believe strongly that international development has to begin with promoting food security.

That philosophy has been at the heart of American foreign policy for over 50 years -- from the Berlin Airlift...to the Marshall Plan...to our early P.L. 480 programs in India...to our recent assistance efforts in Korea, Indonesia and Russia, where economic recovery efforts were thwarted by disastrous financial and weather crises.

Last year, the U.S. government shipped 9.6 million metric tons of food overseas, more than three times the 1998 level. Almost 80 countries were on the receiving end, including North Korea and Vietnam, which hadn't received a shipment since the Vietnam War. Other recipients included Central American hurricane victims and Kosovar refugees.

Our food aid can also be converted into other forms of development assistance. In Yemen, for

example, by monetizing wheat and flour, we have been able to provide support for schools, clinics and refugee infrastructure.

I want to take this opportunity to announce more food aid today. The U.S. Department of Agriculture is making a new donation -- 350,000 metric tons of farm commodities to drought-afflicted and war-torn nations, including Afghanistan, Kenya and nations in the Horn of Africa. This package, worth an estimated \$145 million, will consist primarily of wheat, corn and rice. This is a donation that came at the request of the UN, and the bulk of it will be distributed through the World Food Program.

Let me add that American food aid and food security efforts are successful in large part because of the commitment and cooperation of the entire UN system, from Secretary-General Annan on down. That includes, among many others: Mark Malloch-Brown at UNDP...Carol Bellamy at UNICEF...Catherine Bertini at the World Food Program...Jacques Diouf at the FAO, who has shown outstanding leadership on scientific issues within Codex Alimentarius...and Fawzi Al-Sultan of the International Fund for Agricultural Development, with whom we recently signed an important agreement to jointly improve agricultural marketing infrastructure in developing countries.

It's important to remember that there's more to food security than food aid. Encouraging open markets and trade liberalization is also a part of food security. That's one of the reasons that the Clinton-Gore Administration has been so committed to China's accession to the WTO. That's why we fought so hard for the new legislation that will strengthen U.S. commercial ties with sub-Saharan Africa and the Caribbean Basin. That's why we worked for nearly five years on a trade treaty with Vietnam, which was finally concluded last week.

It was with food security in mind that the United States crafted its proposal for the next round of WTO negotiations. The proposal, which we recently presented in Geneva, reaches out to developing and least developed nations. We want to give them the ability to import the food they need to be able to feed their people. And on the export side, we want to give them the opportunity to compete on a level playing field, without having to go up against subsidized farm exports from the European Union.

There are still other aspects of food security -- responsible conservation and sustainable agricultural practices, agricultural research and nutrition education, strong rural infrastructure, urban and peri-urban agriculture, effective food safety regulation and more. And many of these are elements of the United States Action Plan on Food Security, which is our strategy for helping meet the goal established at the 1996 World Food Summit, to cut world hunger in half by 2015.

And it's with these issues in mind that I will be traveling to Nigeria, Kenya and South Africa for a week-long trip at the end of the month. Our delegation will hold meetings with government officials, private voluntary organizations, citizens, business leaders and academics. We intend to make stops at an agricultural research facility, a refugee feeding camp, as well as a number of

health care facilities and local schools. We want to highlight the need for continued U.S.-Africa trade and the importance of building up African agriculture and promoting self-sufficiency. Overall, I want to shine the spotlight on the desperate urgency of the development challenge in Africa, on issues from food security, to sustainable development, to AIDS, democratic reform and more.

We can't talk about global food security without discussing one of the hottest issues in agriculture today, and that is biotechnology. The math is really simple: Over 800 million of the world's citizens are already chronically hungry. The world population is projected to soar to 9 billion within 50 years, with much of that growth happening in the developing world. Meanwhile, the world's arable land base is shrinking. To meet skyrocketing food and fiber demand, we have to do something to squeeze higher yields out of fewer and fewer acres. And I believe biotechnology has to be at least part of the answer.

Not only can biotech increase the *quantity* of food produced, it can enhance the *quality* as well, as genetic engineering allows us to develop fresher, healthier, more nutritious foods. Take, for example, the new variety of rice developed by a group of Swiss scientists, rice that contains beta-carotene, the biochemical that turns into Vitamin A. Vitamin A deficiency is one of the leading causes of blindness, illness and death in the developing world, where rice happens to be a dietary staple.

Biotechnology's benefits are far-reaching, with all kinds of implications for food security. It can allow farmers to cut input costs; it can help farmers use less water and fewer pesticides, thus lessening the strain on our natural resources; it has the ability to create crops with drought-, pest- and disease-resistant features, as well as certain medicinal qualities.

But, in my opinion, the biotechnology dialogue has too often ignored what transgenic crops can mean for food security, especially in the developing world. Instead, there's been a very loud, contentious, transatlantic food fight focused primarily on the safety of these new food varieties, their environmental impact, and the ethical question of whether genetic engineering is an inappropriate manipulation of nature.

Don't get me wrong. These are important, legitimate issues to raise. And the United States has a sound, transparent, science-based regulatory system, designed to ensure -- as best we possibly can -- that no biotech product comes to market that is environmentally hazardous or unsafe for human consumption. We take this regulatory responsibility very seriously, and we are constantly working on ways to strengthen our biotech approval process, soliciting input and advice from outside experts.

In my opinion, both sides -- biotech advocates and opponents -- are guilty of losing sight of biotechnology's humanitarian potential. Many of the opponents, frankly, can afford the luxury

of their opposition; they don't have to worry about food insecurity, since they live in prosperous, agriculturally abundant societies.

And biotech's champions, especially the multinational corporations who develop the products, are often too narrowly focused on the bottom line. They have geared their marketing, research and development toward products that will bear immediate profit, rather than tailoring their efforts more toward Third World needs. Of course, corporations exist for the purpose of making a profit. But if they took the longer view, they might see the benefit of focusing on the developing world. Not just as a gesture of corporate citizenship, but because such an investment will ultimately pay dividends as developing countries mature into reliable customers.

One of the challenges of the coming years will be to move past the somewhat stale current debate and harness the power of biotechnology for the benefit of the poorer, food-insecure regions of the world. That will have to be a joint effort on the part of governments, the private sector and the multilateral community.

Why are food and food security such critical elements of international development? It's simple: ***food is the most basic of human essentials. It is the very first step toward empowerment and self-reliance. Nothing is possible without it.*** And all of us, working together, need to be innovative in devising solutions that get food in the hands of those who need it.

In the United States, one of the ways we've attacked hunger is through early intervention, by feeding young children in school. The School Meals program has been one of the greatest successes of 20th century American government activism. It serves about 27 million children a day, giving them the sustenance they need to learn.

I have been talking with George McGovern, U.S. Ambassador to the FAO, and others about ways to take the success we've had with this domestic program and apply it internationally. In doing so, we could create something of a domino effect, helping battle some of the other plagues of the developing world.

Global school feeding would encourage more children to stay in school and reduce dependence on child labor. It has the potential to raise academic performance and increase literacy rates, thus cultivating human capital and creating more knowledge, more professionals, more scientists, more lawyers, more entrepreneurs and so on.

Global school feeding, by furthering education, could lead to expanded democratic participation and therefore more responsive and accountable public officials. Improved education may help spread information about AIDS prevention. And it's been demonstrated that when young girls stay in school, they bear fewer children. So education also leads to more responsible family planning, and therefore sustainable population growth and improved environmental conditions.

Now, in the U.S. and the rest of the industrialized world, this and other development ideas are often met with resistance from isolationist forces who like to portray international development as a waste of public money or some kind of global welfare. To them I say: ***international development and food security are as pragmatic as they are humanitarian.*** In addition to being moral imperatives, they are in our self-interest as well.

In today's global village, with the nations of the world so closely linked, deprivation and hunger in Bangladesh or Ethiopia hit closer to home than ever before. For one thing, international development is an investment that brings a considerable return, in the form of robust trading partners, a growing consumer class eager to shop in the global marketplace.

International development is also sound foreign policy. For example, food shortages have historically been a major source of armed conflict around the globe. So promoting food security advances American national security interests by promoting peace and stability in the less stable regions of the world. If we can invest in American security by sending peacekeeping forces to the Balkans -- and putting American lives on the line in the process -- surely we can invest in one of the best peacekeeping methods of all: international development.

I want to close with a story that I think illustrates the importance of food in international development. It's a story about a young boy who visits a submarine and has the opportunity to meet the captain. He was very curious, this boy, and fascinated with the submarine's ability to stay underwater for so long. So he asks the captain: "What happens when submarines run out of fuel?" And the captain explained that they run on nuclear energy and can stay underwater for a decade or so. "Well," the boy asked, "what happens when they run out of drinking water?" And the captain explained all the different distillation methods they had to make sea water potable. Finally, the boy asked: "So when *do* submarines come up?" "That's easy," the captain said, "*when we run out of food.*"

It all starts with food. It is the fundamental building block of a healthy people. Without food, there can be no democracy-building, no civil society, no rule of law, no effective education or job training, no business development. Without the proper nourishment, no one can use a computer, take advantage of a microloan, hold down a job, or be a productive member of society in any way.

So it's critical that food and agriculture policy -- as well as forestry and natural resources policy -- be a part of any strategy for international development. That's why I'm here, as U.S. Secretary of Agriculture. And I sincerely hope that my Department and its counterparts around the world will work even more closely in the future with all of you in the development community.

This has been a great honor for me. Thank you very much for your time.

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**REMARKS OF SECRETARY DAN GLICKMAN
NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF AMERICA'S SECOND HARVEST
TUCSON, ARIZONA -- SEPTEMBER 8, 2000**

Thank you for that kind introduction Glenn.

I'm very honored to be here, especially since this is the last year of an Administration that has worked so closely with America's Second Harvest to achieve so much on behalf of America's neediest citizens.

I want to thank Deborah Leff, for her visionary leadership in helping to expand efforts on community food security and advocating for such vital programs as Food Stamps.

I want to salute Sister Christine Vladimiroff who did a really terrific job helping to build America's Second Harvest into the organization it is today, and I also want to thank her for volunteering to co-chair the Food Security Advisory Committee.

Since this is the first conference since the merger, I want to add a special word of praise for Chris Martin for her vision in leading FoodChain's merger with America's Second Harvest. Both organizations have shown courage in coming together, making tough changes and building by far the largest domestic hunger relief organization in the country. Believe me, in Washington we have our share of turf battles, so perhaps we might learn a thing or two from your experience.

And I also want to thank America's Second Harvest's Director of Public Policy and Research, Doug O'Brien and his dedicated staff for regularly keeping USDA's feet to the fire.

I do want to take this opportunity to introduce two of my aides that are with me today. Ed Cooney, my Special Assistant for Nutrition, who has done an outstanding job helping to fortify America's nutrition safety net. And Joel Berg, my jack-of-all trades when it comes to hunger issues. In fact he recently went with me to Africa and is working on our new \$300 million Global Food for Education initiative that Senator McGovern spoke to you about yesterday.

But most of all, I want to thank you -- the people on the front lines in the battle against hunger. You understand hunger and food insecurity, not only as expressed in aggregate statistics, but on a personal level. You hear the stories, and see the children and seniors and working poor. And frankly I'm encouraged by the number of people here today, because it says to me that there are thousands more just like you who understand that everyone has a role to play in fighting hunger.

The federal government is in the vanguard of that fight. We've learned over the years in a bipartisan way that what we do at the federal level makes a profound difference in people's lives.

I'm reminded of a story about a religious girl who brings her fiancé home to meet her parents. After dinner the father and the young man have a private chat. The father asks, "So what are

your plans." And the young man replies, "I am a biblical scholar."

"Admirable," says the father, "but what will you do to provide a nice house for my daughter?" And the young man says, "I will study and God will provide for us." "And how will you provide her a beautiful engagement ring?" "I will concentrate on my studies, and God will provide for us." "And how will you support the children?" "Don't worry sir," he says, "God will provide." The conversation proceeds like this and each time, "God will provide for us."

Later the mother asks, "So, how did it go?" And the father says, "Good news and bad news. Bad news is that he has no job and no plans. Good news is he thinks I'm God."

Now few of us have a rich father-in-law, but we do have an Uncle Sam. That's not to say the people who need our help don't work or are somehow undeserving. The fact is most people in need are the working poor, children and seniors. In fact typical recipients are working families and individuals who stay on the Food Stamp program less than 18 months.

There are millions in poverty working hard to make ends meet, striving to achieve the American dream yet struggling to put food on the table. Many of them would benefit from an increase in the minimum wage. And many seniors would benefit from having meaningful prescription drug coverage so they wouldn't have to choose between food and medicine. They are all part of the American family, and it is incumbent upon government to help the less fortunate members of our family. As Hubert Humphrey said, "The moral test of government is how it treats those who are in the dawn of life, the children; those who are in the twilight of life, the aged; and those who are in the shadows of life, the sick, the needy and the handicapped."

This Administration set out to streamline government and make it more effective, but without gutting programs that matter to people. And, with the help of like-minded organizations like America's Second Harvest, we not only stood our ground, we expanded and fortified the nutrition safety net, and strengthened the foundation from which to build.

This was the first Administration in 20 years to submit and get passed its own Child Nutrition Reauthorization Bill which included after school snacks for Kids Cafes. We also established nutrition requirements that help ensure that meals served to our school children meet the Dietary Guidelines of Americans. We and others also fought hard to restore food stamps to legal immigrants. We initiated a pilot program to bring universal breakfasts to our schools, which I'm hoping we can expand into a full-fledged school breakfast program. And we continue to work toward the goal of a fully-funded Women, Infants and Children's program and expanding WIC participation among hard-to-reach women. Today I'm announcing \$1.4 million in annual WIC special project grants to six states to help improve the quality of the program and develop local outreach efforts to get to the hardest to reach folks who can benefit from WIC.

At USDA we took our commodity donations to a new level both in terms of quantity and quality. Since 1995, we have more than tripled the amount of bonus commodities that USDA has

purchased for distribution to food banks and other organizations. Overall, this fiscal year, USDA will spend well over \$200 million to purchase more than 200 million pounds of food for distribution. And in the Crop Insurance Bill that was passed last spring, there is \$200 million for commodity donations, half of which is earmarked for The Emergency Food Assistance Program.

That brings me to another point. Food insecurity isn't just about quantity anymore. It's about health too, about getting folks nutritious food to eat. Two years ago USDA began focusing national attention on a growing epidemic in this country – obesity.

Food insecurity and obesity are in fact two sides of the same coin. For millions of families, when they don't have enough money to buy food, they go hungry. But, when they have only a little money, they tend to buy low-cost foods which may or may not have all the nutrients they need. So our challenge isn't only to ensure that people have enough food to eat, but that they have the resources and access to enough of the right foods.

Obesity, especially among children, is a very serious public health problem. For example, we are seeing a dramatic rise in diabetes which is directly related to obesity. One of my recommendations to my successors both at USDA and other agencies will be to focus on the obesity epidemic.

Government's role has been vital in the last seven years in not only fortifying what government does but in helping others to do their share.

In 1996 the President signed the Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act which allows businesses and farmers to donate food without fear of liability. That same year the President directed all federal agencies to help increase the recovery and gleaning of excess food.

We've established 1-800-GLEAN-IT a toll-free how-to gleaning hotline. We've distributed over 20,000 copies of a Citizens' Guide to Food Recovery and Gleaning and we worked with the National Restaurant Association to produce a food donation guide for its members.

We've changed crop insurance regulations to allow farmers to donate partially damaged but perfectly wholesome produce without affecting their claims. And we've created or aided grass-roots recovery projects in over 40 states with farmers and ranchers that's resulted in donations of million of pounds of excess food -- much of which has gone to America's Second Harvest food banks. And we've had a great deal of success in gleaning efforts with farmers markets.

When we started down this path a few years ago, gleaning and food recovery were a whole new concept for USDA. I first became involved with this issue in Wichita. My wife and I saw tremendous waste in industrial cafeterias – perfectly good, edible food going to the dumpster. My instincts, my values told me we had to do something about that. There's a lot of talk in the air these days about the influence of faith in government. Well I'm proud of the personal and spiritual values that help me to be a better public servant. The Bible teaches us, 'When you reap

the harvest of your land, do not reap the corners of your field, and do not glean the fallen ears of your crop. Nor may you strip your vineyard bare, nor gather the overlooked grapes; you must leave them for the poor and the stranger.'

Whether it's gleaning on farms, food drives at work, recovering food from restaurants, getting food to hungry families, working with anti-hunger organizations like America's Second Harvest or helping to build community gardens, each of us has a duty to the poor and to the stranger.

For the first time in history, food recovery became a key part of USDA's message and mission. But the important point here is that fighting hunger cannot be about one person, or one piece of legislation, or one food drive. It's an ongoing struggle in which each citizen can play a role.

That's the theme behind USDA's Community Food Security Initiative. Folks at the local level putting their ideas to work in their communities with USDA as a facilitator, a partner, a consultant, even an engineer.

We're moving beyond just feeding people to enhancing the principle of empowerment. We're working to help folks get to where they not only can take care of themselves and their families – but where they too are contributing members of society, who also can give something back.

To help reach this goal, I'm releasing new toolkits to aid in state and local anti-hunger efforts. One of these is a handbook called the Community Food Security Resource Kit, the most comprehensive guide ever produced on Federal resources and best practices to fight hunger, improve nutrition, and strengthen local food systems. Simply put, it is an invaluable "How To" guide that will be in hard copy and on the USDA web site.

So government does have a very important and meaningful role and what we do does make a difference. There is less hunger in America today than in the 1960's -- and no longer any actual starvation -- because of vital programs like Food Stamps, School Meals, WIC and so on.

But with all we have done, and with all we are doing, I stand before you today, just a few months short of the end of my tenure as Agriculture Secretary to say, *it is just not enough.*

Today I'm releasing the latest USDA study on hunger and food insecurity in America. And I'm afraid that they confirm what you see in your food banks, food pantries and hot meals programs everyday – there are still too many people in this great and prosperous nation who face hunger and food insecurity on a regular basis.

In 1999, 10.1% of American households, comprising about 31 million Americans and including more than 12 million children, lived in households that suffered from either hunger or food insecurity. Thirty one million people. During that same period of time, unemployment has gone down far more dramatically. This report suggests what you already know, that too many hard working people are food insecure. And though the report shows that hunger and food insecurity

have declined since 1995, the fact is it remains unacceptably high despite the most prosperous economy in history.

Folks, if we cannot marshal the will and the commitment to fix this problem now, during these times of prosperity, then when?

I'm not here to give a political speech, but these days I've heard some talk about how there is no hunger, how there really is no food insecurity. Well, as the Secretary whose job it is to fight hunger, I feel it is my duty to set the record straight. Not only is there too much hunger and food insecurity in this nation, it exists in every state, and every state has a responsibility to ensure that all its citizens have their basic needs met. Problems are not solved simply by talking about them or pretending they don't exist. We need to acknowledge that hunger is still a problem and take concrete action to address the challenge.

Over the past seven years this Administration has expanded the federal nutrition safety net and we've built a strong partnership between government and non-profits and faith-based organizations. Now we must build on that infrastructure.

We begin with Food Stamps. The President, Vice President and I have been concerned about the dramatic decline in the number of people using Food Stamps compared to the many millions who are eligible.

I want to thank America's Second Harvest for your study indicating that difficult, often unfair Food Stamps applications procedures in the states — as well as USDA's own sometimes burdensome guidance to the states — make it difficult and humiliating for families in need to get Food Stamps. We should not punish people for being poor. Being poor is difficult enough. It should not be substantially more burdensome to get USDA Food Stamp benefits than USDA farm payments. And while I welcome the study, I also want to encourage America's Second Harvest to increase your already determined efforts in reaching out to folks and informing them of the availability of Food Stamps, particularly the working poor who have left the cash assistance program but remain eligible for Food Stamps.

As you know we have launched an extensive outreach effort to inform people about Food Stamps. I'd also like to see the FORK Act become law so we can enhance food stamp outreach for children. But we also need to provide benefits to vulnerable groups like adult legal immigrants and remove the administrative barriers to Food Stamp participation. That's why passing the Hunger Relief Act is so important, so we can raise the value of a car people own without being penalized at the dinner table. And shortly we will be releasing new Food Stamp regulations that help to improve access, make the program more flexible and generally ensure that the rights of Food Stamp clients are protected.

In fact, Under Secretary Shirley Watkins has just completed a series of Food Stamp conversations with hundreds of people across the nation giving USDA advice on how to improve

the Food Stamp program. We also need to expand our extremely successful Food Stamp/Social Security Combined Application project which helps seniors apply for Food Stamps through their social security office -- a sort of one stop shopping that has gotten dramatically positive results in a pilot effort in South Carolina.

I remain concerned about the Food Stamp application process. In some states the application is only a few pages while in others it is much more complicated. The fact is there is no correlation between the length of an application and the error rate. What is the role of USDA in all of this? In our efforts to ensure reduction of fraud and improper benefit payments, we must also use good judgment and common sense. The Welfare Reform law said we cannot force states to adopt a model application but the divergence in the complexity of these applications is unacceptable. I've instructed our Food Stamp administrators to work with community based organization and the Office of Inspector General to try to address this problem.

One of our proudest successes has been our ability to empower and motivate, to provide the seeds for grass roots solutions and to help organizations like America's Second Harvest reach their fullest potential. So we need to ensure that the Community Food Security Initiative continues to receive bipartisan support in the tradition of other federal nutrition safety net programs. There is a rather blatant attempt in the Congress to undermine this program and I can't understand why. This program helps people and communities at the grass roots level develop local solutions for hunger and food insecurity. And it provides support to non-government and faith-based organizations to give aid, comfort and guidance to the neediest among us. What's wrong with that? It seems to me that some of my friends on the other side of the political aisle ought to be the biggest advocates for community-based solutions.

We're working to expand our School Breakfasts and After School Snack Programs including Kids Café, and to expand outreach efforts and help communities build infrastructures and facilities to meet the challenges of food insecurity. And we're working to create jobs and economic opportunities and provide better education so people have the tools to lift themselves out of the cycle of poverty, provide for themselves and become contributing members of society.

There is a lot to be proud of. But frankly, I can't tell you how shocking it is that there are 31 million food insecure people in the richest most abundant nation on earth -- in a nation that next year will export \$51.5 billion in farm products -- in a nation that throws out over a quarter of its food.

Fighting hunger has always been a major concern of mine from earliest days of public service in Wichita, to my days in the House where I was proud to be a part of the effort in 1977 to eliminate the purchase requirement for Food Stamps, and now to my days as Secretary where we've fortified the nutrition safety net and developed a role as partner for the federal government in community based anti-hunger efforts. But just because I will be leaving my present job, doesn't mean I will be leaving this issue. No matter who you are or what you do, you can have a role in eliminating food insecurity for all of our neighbors.

Hunger and food insecurity are profoundly difficult challenges that have plagued humankind for centuries. All of us gathered here today, mindful of the fact that there is still much to do, should be proud of how far we've come, and how much we've achieved through government, non-profits, communities, and faith-based organizations working together. But our greatest legacy in this effort is the momentum and dedication we pass to those who succeed us. So no matter who sits in my chair come January, I'm asking you to hold his or her feet to the fire, and to ensure that the gains we've made are carried on, and the foundation we've fortified is further built upon.

Thank you.

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**REMARKS BY
SECRETARY DAN GLICKMAN
DEDICATION OF THE CARTER BOYHOOD HOME
NOVEMBER 17, 2000 - PLAINS, GEORGIA**

Thank you very much, Congressman Bishop, for that kind introduction and for your leadership on behalf of southwestern Georgia.

Thanks to Fred Boyles, Pat Hooks and everyone at the Park Service for all the effort that's gone into the Boyhood Home and the entire Jimmy Carter National Historic Site. Long after all of us are gone, future generations will have the opportunity to learn from the life of this extraordinary man...and it will be because of your hard work.

In some sense, I owe the launch of my political career to President Carter. I was first elected to Congress in 1976, the same year he won the Presidency. Even though a Kansas favorite son, Bob Dole, was the Republican Vice Presidential nominee, the Carter-Mondale ticket came very close to carrying Kansas, a surge that carried me to the House of Representatives. My victory surprised all the pundits, since I had defeated a Republican incumbent in perhaps the most Republican state in the nation. My victory also surprised me. I wasn't convinced until I received a congratulatory note the next morning, which caused me to exclaim to my family: "Do you believe it...Jimmy Carter sent me a telegram!"

But I'm here today not just as a general admirer of President Carter. I'm here as the Secretary of Agriculture, to honor a man whose life was shaped by his childhood experiences on a farm in a small rural community. Jimmy Carter has always understood the risks and hardships associated with family farm agriculture and small-town America because he lived them. We're talking about a man who saw a scorching drought all but destroy his family farm in the 1950s. One hundred eighty-seven dollars -- that was the net profit of his farm business in 1954. It reminds me of that old line -- sad but too often true -- about the farmer who says: "I sure hope we break even this year. We could really use the money."

President Carter's background in agriculture drives his work to this day, as the Carter Center's Global 2000 program helps farmers in the developing world adopt the techniques they need to boost productivity and achieve self-sufficiency. President Carter understands that abundant, sustainable agriculture is one of the keys to defeating the plague of world hunger. He understands the role of agriculture in foreign policy. He understands that farm commodities -- as a human essential -- are unique among all the goods and services traded in the global marketplace. He understands that they are a tool of humanitarianism.

And President Carter's work in agriculture is local as well as global. Two years ago, when a disastrous drop in hog prices threatened the livelihoods of thousands of Georgia farmers, President Carter personally weighed in with me and President Clinton. And his input helped us put together an assistance package that helped hog producers weather the storm.

You know, when you consider his hands-on farm experience...his efforts in agriculture...his dedication to rural homeownership through Habitat for Humanity...his commitment to nutrition programs both at home and abroad...his belief in land conservation and stewardship...it occurs to me that *Jimmy Carter would've made an outstanding Secretary of Agriculture*. But I guess he shot just a little higher than that. But, you know Mr. President, the job is opening up in a few months, and I'd be happy to put in a good word for you.

I believe that the family farm is more than an economic unit. It's a place where values are taught and learned - values like community, integrity, compassion and faith. As Jimmy Carter ascended to the very pinnacle of American political life, he not only didn't forget those values... he made them an integral part of his leadership style and governing philosophy.

The Bible reminds us that a man's life consists not in the abundance of the things which he possesses. So it was in Jimmy Carter's boyhood home, which was spiritually -- if not materially -- rich. When President Carter was very young, there wasn't even electricity or running water. But there was compassion; there was decency; there was love; and there was hard work.

Was there ever hard work. *An Hour Before Daylight* is the title of President Carter's new book, because that's when young Jimmy Carter would wake up to the sound of an iron bell, which signaled the beginning of the day and the beginning of arduous farm chores.

That work ethic also instilled in President Carter a strong entrepreneurial drive. As a boy, he would bring farm goods into Plains on a wagon and sell them for profit. He actually saved enough money to buy and then rent five houses whose prices had been driven down by the Depression. As an adult, President Carter developed a successful peanut shelling and warehousing operation and eventually expanded into cotton and the fertilizer business.

This rural community where Jimmy Carter grew up was, at the time, a rigidly segregated one. But thanks in part to a strong-willed mother who rejected the mores of the time, Jimmy Carter reached out across racial divides from an early age. He forged friendships with young African-American children like Johnny Raven, who delivered our invocation this morning. He developed a special relationship with Jack and Rachael Clark, who worked on the Carter farm and acted almost as surrogate parents to young Jimmy.

Inclusion and racial justice have been tireless causes for President Carter throughout his adult life. In the military, when his submarine docked in Bermuda, local British officials invited the crew to a party...the white members of the crew, that is. Jimmy Carter was instrumental in persuading the entire crew to decline the invitation.

Back home in Georgia, when many in the community joined the segregationist White Citizens Council, Jimmy Carter refused...even though it led to a brief boycott of the family business. When their church wouldn't admit African-Americans to the congregation, Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter were lonely voices of dissent. Just after being sworn in as Governor, Jimmy Carter boldly

declared in his inaugural speech that the time for segregation was over. That, of course, is a no-brainer today, but it was a startling and courageous statement in 1971.

Jimmy Carter's life is one to be emulated. He has had a loving marriage – a true friendship and partnership – that has lasted more than half a century. He pursued power, not for its own sake but as a means to advance the human condition. He is a modern-day Renaissance man – a statesman, a sportsman and a Sunday School teacher...a poet, a professor and a public servant. He was a proud soldier, working on a nuclear submarine no less, who turned out to be one of the great peacemakers of his time.

He is a philanthropist, but he does more than write the check and leave it to someone else to solve the problem. He gets his own hands dirty. He wears out his own shoe-leather. ***He was there*** personally to monitor elections everywhere from Jamaica to Zambia. ***He was there*** to help negotiate the peaceful abdication of power by Haitian dictators. ***He was there*** in Africa to help people battle Guinea worm disease and river blindness.

Oh, and of course, he was also the 39th President of the United States. Only in a life truly remarkable could the leadership of the free world be just one of many noteworthy highlights.

And now he's "retired," if you can call it that. I recently read an interview President Carter gave about his book, *The Virtues of Aging*, in which he discusses the pleasures of retirement. Now, first of all, only a man with most of the original hair on his head could write a book called "The Virtues of Aging." Secondly, what Jimmy and Rosalyn Carter have done for the last 20 years can hardly be called "retirement." Even if he has taken up downhill skiing and bird-watching, the truth is ***President Carter has done ten times more in retirement than most people accomplish in their entire professional lives.***

Jimmy Carter has shown that a lifetime of good work doesn't have to end when you lose an election. He has shown that there is life after public service, that ***the end of public service doesn't have to mean the end of service to humanity.***

I find myself today where President Carter was in 1980 – in my mid-50s, dropping the curtain on a career in government. As I contemplate my next step in life's journey, I can only hope to meet the standard he has set.

There is a Hebrew prayer that asks us to "live as if all life depended on you. Do your share to add some improvement, to supply some one thing that is missing, and to leave the world a little better for your stay in it." Jimmy Carter has done all that and more.

Ladies and gentlemen...it gives me great pleasure to present a friend and hero...President Jimmy Carter.

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